

Simplicial n -categories to n -categories

Urs

March 14, 2008

Fix some notion of “space” and some notion of path n -groupoid $\mathcal{P}_n(X)$ of a space X . For instance “space” could mean manifold and $\mathcal{P}_n(X)$ could denote the strict n -groupoid of thin homotopy classes of globular n -paths. But the precise details do not matter for the following discussion.

If a surjection

$$\pi : Y \twoheadrightarrow X$$

is regular, then all the fiberwise products

$$Y^{[n]} := \underbrace{Y \times_X Y \times_X \cdots \times_X Y}_n$$

exist again as spaces, and we get the simplicial space

$$Y^\bullet := (\dots Y^{[3]} \rightrightarrows Y^{[2]} \rightrightarrows Y).$$

This happens to be the nerve of a category, namely the Čech groupoid over Y whose objects are the points of Y , and which has a unique morphism for every ordered pair of points in the same fiber of Y .

Now we can apply $\mathcal{P}_n : \text{Spaces} \rightarrow n\text{Cat}$ to Y^\bullet to obtain the simplicial n -category

$$\mathcal{P}_n(Y^\bullet) := (\dots \mathcal{P}_n(Y^{[3]}) \rightrightarrows \mathcal{P}_n(Y^{[2]}) \rightrightarrows \mathcal{P}_n(Y)).$$

What is the analog of the Čech groupoid now? It should be an n -groupoid whose k -morphisms are l -morphisms $P_l(Y^{[k-l+1]})$ of $\mathcal{P}_n(Y^{[k-l+1]})$.

Hence from the bisimplicial set obtained by passing to the nerve of all our n -groupoids

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\
 \dots P_2(Y^{[3]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_2(Y^{[2]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_2(Y) \\
 \Downarrow & & \Downarrow & & \Downarrow \\
 \dots P_1(Y^{[3]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_1(Y^{[2]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_1(Y) \\
 \Downarrow & & \Downarrow & & \Downarrow \\
 \dots P_0(Y^{[3]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_0(Y^{[2]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_0(Y)
 \end{array}$$

we want to, *somehow*, obtain a mere simplicial set

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
& \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\
& & & & & \\
\cdots & P_2(Y^{[3]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_2(Y^{[2]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_2(Y) \\
& \Downarrow & & \Downarrow & & \Downarrow \\
\cdots & P_1(Y^{[3]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_1(Y^{[2]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_1(Y) \\
& \Downarrow & & \Downarrow & & \Downarrow \\
\cdots & P_0(Y^{[3]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_0(Y^{[2]}) & \rightrightarrows & P_0(Y)
\end{array}$$

whose set of 0-simplices is

$$P_0(Y),$$

whose set of 1-simplices is generated from

$$P_1(Y), P_0(Y^{[2]}),$$

modulo some relations, whose set of 2-simplices is generated from

$$P_2(Y), P_1(Y^{[2]}), P_0(Y^{[3]})$$

modulo some relations. And so on.

Question: What, if any, is the name of the abstract construction achieving this?